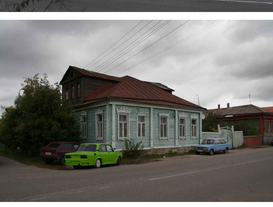

Raycenter

2013 10.08 – 29.08 Art center at former Krasnopresnensky sugar refining factory, Moscow

Photography series
Dimension: 40 x 60 cm
Production: 2012 – 2013

A typical back of beyond from the standpoint of large city inhabitants looks like this: a concrete modernist stele with an emblem and welcome words on the gateway road and a meaningful "Good journey!" wish on its exit way, asphalt driveways with last repairings made in the 50s, Lenin street leading to Central square smoothly. Most of these towns maintain steady links with villages and other neighboring rural settlements; agrarian and urban traits are intertwined into paradoxical at first glance but stable if to get accustomed to, organism. Small towns now are likely to be industrial places with rural living conditions, ruined buildings of former factory shops and blown out signal lights of tall plant chimneys.

These towns, usually functioning as district centers, don't get into view of media regularly. Most attention is paid to villages: human tragedies, joblessness, depression are in focus of bloggers and news reporters. Regional centers with their appealing main streets facades frequently appear on the TV as image makers for whole regions. However, small towns have only one function of a transfer station with an intercity express delayed forever for some of its inhabitants. It is considered that small towns are places for minors who could not integrate into big cities' communities or who got a place at local levels of so-called vertical of authority.

Small towns are too far from the rest world, and everything here becomes exaggerated and gets in the eyes straightly with biting sarcasm: social differentiation, ruins of a bygone era, and naive dreams in school essays.

District centers, despite their geographical and climate differences, form the metaphysical view of post–Soviet area, invariable from country to country, without urbanization and ecological tourism established yet, but with production sites, income sources and lives already destroyed.

Raycenter is a homophone of the Russian word that means *district center*.

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